

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the costs involved;

(c) whether it is a fact that recently the scientific fraternity have made certain suggestions on how to improve the safety and reliability of the space capsule which would take the Indians to space; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken/being taken to examine and implement them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) ISRO has carried out detailed studies on feasibility of undertaking indigenous manned space missions. These studies cover the requirements of an autonomous Orbital Vehicle, life support systems, improved reliability and safety systems, crew escape system, etc. The assessment of expenditure for the manned space mission to low earth orbit is about Rs.10,000 crores spread over a period of 8 to 10 years. Manned mission to moon could be the next step.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The studies carried out by ISRO were presented at a peer review meeting, which concluded that it is possible to undertake a manned mission to low earth orbit in about eight years from the date of approval. There were suggestions on several points related to technical aspects including reliability and safety requirement for manned missions. These suggestions are taken up by ISRO for further detailed assessment.

MPLADS fund

†996. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan to enhance the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme fund;

(b) if so, by when it would be implemented and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the amount yet to be allocated to the nominated Members of the Rajya Sabha under this scheme and for what purpose the said amount would be used?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Government is not considering any proposal to enhance the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme fund at present.

(c) The annual allocation of MPLADS funds is Rs. 2 crore per Member of Parliament including nominated Members of the Rajya Sabha. Out of Rs. 54 crore entitlement upto the year 2006-07 of 10 sitting nominated Rajya Sabha Members, Rs. 23 crore is yet to be released. Rs. 22 crore of former nominated Rajya Sabha Members is also pending for release. The Guidelines on MPLADS provide that Nominated Members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha can recommend works for implementation in one or more districts anywhere in the country for creation of durable community assets including works in priority sectors such as drinking water, primary education, public health, sanitation, roads, etc.

NSSO estimate for BPL

997. DR. NARAYAN SINGH MANAKLAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that NSSO has conducted a survey to estimate people Below Poverty Line;

(b) if so, the details thereof such as number/percentage of people under poverty line;

(c) the coverage of the sample and its universal validation;

(d) whether the recent survey result is being utilized in public policy formulation and implementation; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) The NSSO (National Sample Survey Organization) does not estimate number of people below the poverty line (BPL). However, the NSSO conducts the large sample surveys on Household Consumption Expenditure, which are used by the Planning Commission for estimating the people below the poverty line.